

Groundbreakings Kick off Two Highway Projects in Western Kentucky totaling more than \$50 Million



Governor Ernie Fletcher and Commissioner of Highways Marc Williams show a map of the new KY 80 route to event attendees.

Governor Ernie Fletcher and Transportation Secretary Bill Nighbert joined western Kentucky legislators and officials in May to break ground on two highway projects—one in Calloway County and the other in Christian County.

“These projects are part of a long-term plan to upgrade the transportation network across southern Kentucky to improve safety and to help support economic development,” Governor Fletcher said.

“Through the leadership and vision of Governor Fletcher, these projects continue the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet’s commitment to providing safer, reliable roads to enhance the quality of life for Kentuckians,” said Secretary Nighbert.

“We have been working diligently to make improvements to our highway infrastructure,” said Highways Commissioner Marc Williams. “Our first goal is to create a safe and reliable highway system for Kentuckians and people who visit our com-

monwealth, but it is even better when we can induce economic prosperity at the same time.”

The project in Calloway County consists of three contracts totaling more than \$25 million for construction of new KY 80 from U.S. 641 north of Murray to near the Calloway-Graves County line at Coldwater. Specifically, the three new sections will replace KY 121 as the prime transportation link between Murray and Mayfield. KY 121 is a two-lane highway that does not meet modern design standards. KY 80 will provide a modern limited-access four-lane that will be much safer for the estimated five to seven thousand vehicles a day that travel between Murray and Mayfield.

Jim Smith Construction Company of Grand Rivers was awarded one of the three contracts for \$10,454,683.04 to construct a section of KY 80 from 0.12 of a mile north of KY 1124 to 0.21 miles west of KY 1836, a distance of 6.51 miles. The

work includes asphalt work along with the necessary grade and drain work on the section. The contract has a scheduled completion date of August 1, 2007.

A joint venture of Haydon Brothers, Inc., and Hayden Bridge, Inc., was awarded a contract for construction of a section from 0.12 miles west of KY 1836 to 0.12 miles east of KY 299, a distance of 3.56 miles. The contract is for grade and drain work as well as construction of a bridge. The \$7,954,204.14 contract has a completion date in the fall of 2007.

Jim Smith Contracting LLC of Grand Rivers was also awarded a contract for \$7,230,665.11 for grade and drain work on a section running from 0.12 mile east of KY 299 to U.S. 641 North of Murray. The 4.87 mile section includes construction of a bridge. It has a projected completion date in the fall of 2007.

Chief District Engineer Jim LeFevre said the completion of the three sections will open a significant transportation corridor for the district.

"These projects will open a four-lane corridor from Aurora to Mayfield and will greatly increase the safety and reliability of our highway network in district one," LeFevre said. "Economic development along this corridor will help bring jobs to the counties and communities along the route."

Contractors are working on the construction of all three sections of KY 80 from the Graves-Calloway County Line to U.S. 641 north of Murray.

Work started last year on a section of KY 80 East of Mayfield in Graves County. That contract runs from the intersection of the KY 121 Bypass East of Mayfield to just North of KY 1124 in Graves County. The \$15.1 million contract was awarded to Jim Smith Contracting, LLC of Grand Rivers. The section includes grade, drain and surfacing, as well as six new bridges. That section is expected to open to traffic between Mayfield and the Coldwater Community in August of 2007.

"I'm extremely happy with the priority on the 68/80 Corridor through western Kentucky," said Sen. Ken Winters (R-Murray). "The work on this highway comes at an opportune time to help the economic growth of the region. I am elated at getting to participate in this groundbreaking and I'm excited about the contribution this new highway will make to the economic vitality of the area."

A section of the KY 80 four-lane was opened between Murray and Aurora in the fall of 2004.

"I appreciate Governor Fletcher and Secretary Nighbert keeping this project on the front burner," said Rep. Melvin Henley (R-Murray). "With a \$1.8 Billion shortfall in our Six Year Road Plan, it takes determination and focus to use the dollars we have as efficiently as possible. This new highway will provide an important new link in Kentucky's transportation system and will contribute to the safety and growth of all the communities it touches."

When it eventually connects with the Purchase Parkway at Mayfield, KY 80 will provide four-lane access to the Kentucky-Barkley Lakes area from the west and going south into Tennessee. Additional planning and design work continues on efforts to four-lane U.S. 68 and KY 80 across the Land Between the Lakes to Cadiz.

Christian County motorists can now see work being done on Pennyriple Parkway. This \$25 million project will extend the parkway from U.S. 41-A to Interstate 24.

Secretary Nighbert said, "This project will allow truck traffic traveling on the parkway to have a direct route to I-24, improving traffic flow and making travel safer for Christian County citizens and others who make local trips on U.S. 41-A between Hopkinsville and Fort Campbell."

Governor Fletcher said extending the parkway will provide specific economic benefits that go well beyond Hopkinsville and Christian County. "This new extension provides better interstate connectivity and has obvious benefits for Hopkinsville," said Governor Fletcher. "It is important to note the additional benefits this improved north-south link will have for Madisonville, Henderson and other points along both the Pennyriple and Western Kentucky Parkways."

The first phase of the Pennyriple Parkway extension runs from the present end of the parkway at U.S. 41-A in Hopkinsville to the U.S. 68 Hopkinsville Bypass (Martin Luther King Blvd.). The low bid was submitted by Rogers Group Inc. of Hopkinsville.

Work on the Hopkinsville parkway extension has already started, with the first phase taking approximately 422 working days to complete.

Phase two, now in design for construction at a future date, is expected to extend the parkway to Lovers Lane where it will provide improved access to the Hopkinsville Convention Center and associated developments.



L to R: Mike Agee and Lori Harper with the Rogers Group, Representative James Carr R-8, Representative James Bruce D-9, Senator Joey Pendleton D-3, Governor Ernie Fletcher, Senator Ken Winters R-1, Christian County Judge Executive Steve Tribble, Representative Brent Yonts D-15, and Hopkinsville Mayor Richard Liebe symbolically break ground for the Pennyriple Parkway project at the Hopkinsville Conference and Convention Center.